

THE COMMITTEE appointed to enquire who was the Author of the Pamphlet, intituled, "*Thoughts on the English Government*—addressed to the Quiet Good Sense of the People of England; in a Series of Letters—Letter the First, on the National Character of Englishmen—The Nature of the English Government—The Corruptions caused in both by the Introduction of French Principles—The Effects produced by the Revolution and the Revolution upon Political Principles—The Conduct of the Whig Party—The Character of the modern Democrats—London, Printed for J. Owen, N^o 168, Piccadilly—1795;" and who were empowered to report their Proceedings, from Time to Time, to the House; have, pursuant to the Order of the House, enquired into the Matter to them referred, and agreed upon the following Report.

MR. JOHN OWEN being examined, said, That he is a Bookseller, and lives in Piccadilly.

And being asked, If he knew a Publication, intituled, "*Thoughts on the English Government*?" he replied, Yes; his Name was signed to it.

After this Declaration, Mr. Owen declined giving any further Information to your Committee, on the Plea that it might tend to criminate himself.

And being finally asked, Whether he persisted in refusing to answer any Questions the Committee might put to him? he replied, Yes.

MR. JOHN LAKE being examined, said, That he knows Mr. Wright, the Printer, in Peterborough Court, as also Mr. Street and Mr. Stoop.

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And being asked, Whether he ever heard these Persons speak of a Pamphlet, intituled, "Thoughts on the English Government?" he said, He had.

And being asked, Whether he ever heard them speak of the Author of the Pamphlet? he said, Yes; and that he heard Mr. McDowall's Brother acknowledge that he composed the Press for the Pamphlet, particularly those Parts which have been deemed libellous by the House of Commons; and also that Mr. Reeves had been backwards and forwards at the Office, and the Pamphlet was commonly known throughout the Office by the Name of Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet.—That Mr. Wright, the Printer, was commissioned by Mr. Reeves to get a Person to publish the said Pamphlet; and in consequence Mr. Wright applied to several Bookfellers, who refused to publish it, Mr. Wright refusing to give up the Author; and Mr. Owen, in Piccadilly, undertook to publish it, and Mr. Wright's Porter delivered it, by the Name of Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet, to Mr. Owen; and the Witness thinks Mr. McDowall's Brother said, that Mr. Reeves made some Interlineations at his Frame, while composing, and that Mr. Reeves generally corrected the Press.

Mr. CHARLES MCDOWALL being examined, said, That he is Compositor to Mr. Wright. That he recollects the Pamphlet, intituled, "Thoughts on the English Government," being printed at his Office.

And being asked, Whether the Press was corrected during the printing of the Pamphlet from the Manuscript Sheets? he said, It was.

And being asked, What Persons he saw superintending the Press, and correcting the Proofs? he replied, No one, but Mr. Reeves.

And being asked, If he knew Mr. Reeves by Sight? he said, Yes; he lives in Cecil Street.

And being asked, Whether he saw Mr. Reeves frequently during the printing of the Pamphlet, superintending the Work? he said, Yes.

And being asked, If he ever saw Mr. Reeves write on or correct any of the Proofs? he said, He was not certain.

And being asked, Whether he ever spoke to Mr. Reeves at Mr. Wright's? he said, Yes; frequently.

And being asked, Whether Mr. Reeves's Conduct at Mr. Wright's was such as to lead the Witness to believe him to be the Author of the Pamphlet? he replied, Yes.

And being asked, Whether he knew the Hand-writing of Mr. Reeves? he said, Yes; the Hand-writing that goes for his.

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And being asked, Was the Hand-writing of this Pamphlet, in his Opinion, the same as the Hand-writing that goes for Mr. Reeves's? he said, Yes.

WILLIAM AUGUSTUS MILES, Esquire, being examined, was asked, Whether he has any, and what Reason, to know who is the Author of the Pamphlet, intituled, "Thoughts on the English Government?" he said, Yes. In the first Instance, from Mr. Owen's having presented it to him as Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet; and in the Course of a few Hours afterwards, meeting Mr. Reeves turning out of the Treasury, he (the Witness) informed him, that he had received a Pamphlet written by him. Mr. Reeves asked him the Title. He told him.—Mr. Reeves then enquired, if John Owen had informed him, that he (Mr. Reeves) was the Author. From Delicacy to the Bookseller, he said, No; but the Secret was revealed by a Printer's Man, who, by Mr. Owen's Declaration, he understood to be Mr. Wright's Man.—Mr. Reeves then earnestly recommended him to read the Pamphlet; and to the best of his Recollection, Mr. Reeves desired him to let him know what he thought of it.—That the Witness, on his Return, read it, and found the following Passage:

"In fine, the Government of England is a Monarchy; the Monarchy is the ancient Stock from which have sprung those goodly Branches of the Legislature, the Lords and Commons, that at the same Time give Ornament to the Tree, and afford Shelter to those who seek Protection under it. But these are still only Branches, and derive their Origin and their Nutriment from their common Parent; they may be lopped off, and the Tree is a Tree still; shorn indeed of its Honours, but not like them cast into the Fire. The Kingly Government may go on, in all its Functions, without Lords or Commons," so repugnant to the Principles of the Revolution of 1688, that the Witness immediately sent a Transcript of it to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, accompanied by a Letter; and on the Morning following the Witness wrote a Letter to Mr. Reeves; a Copy of which Letter was delivered in to the Committee, and read, the Witness requesting it might stand a Part of his Examination; and is as follows:

"Pall Mall, November 6, 1795.

"I have read your Pamphlet, Sir, with equal Attention and Concern; with Attention, because you recommended it strongly to my Perusal, and with Concern, because I was hurt that any Man, acquainted with the Principles of the English Constitution,

"Should

" should have the Indiscretion or Effrontery to misrepresent them
 " in a Manner so very gross and unpardonable.—Such Writings
 " tend to bring Monarchy much more into Dispute than the
 " Harangues of Mr. Thelwall and C^o; and Monarchy in this
 " Country does not require to be sustained by Trick and Contri-
 " vance; it has the Support of Reason, Policy, and Experience,
 " The Nonsense and Falsities of Writers, who only prove their
 " Ignorance or Servility, will enlanger it; and if my Advice should
 " be asked, I would seriously recommend you to defend the Excel-
 " lencies of our Constitution by its Excellencies—for they plead
 " far more eloquently in his Favour, than either your Writings or
 " those of Mr. Burke. The Misfortune is, that you confound the
 " Abuses of Government with the Government itself; and having
 " by far a much greater and more decided Interest in the Preser-
 " vation of the one than of the other, your Anxiety for the latter
 " is merely a Contingency on the former, and becomes a mere se-
 " condary Consideration. I will tell you very candidly, that I
 " thought you were going greater Lengths than either Facts or
 " Policy warranted, in November 1792; and I am inclined to
 " believe, that your present Labours are more likely to do Mischief
 " than Good. What you have said in Pages 12 and 13, would, in
 " the Reign of George the First, have sent you to the Pillory; and
 " if Ministers discharge their Duty, they must discourage the Pub-
 " lication in Question—for it is no less incumbent on them to dis-
 " countenance Attacks on the Constitution from one Description of
 " Men than from another. Whether it is assailed by the intem-
 " perate Zeal of Royalists or Republicans, it ought to be defended;
 " for it has equal Danger to apprehend from the extravagant
 " Pretensions of the one and the rancorous Animosity of the
 " other, and as an Individual interested in its Preservation, I will
 " oppose, *exute qu'il coure*, any Innovation on the Part of the
 " Crown, as vehemently as I would on the Part of Democracy;
 " and if you he'd the Blessings of a free Constitution in as much
 " Reverence, and the Smiles of Lord Hawkebury as cheap, as I
 " do, your Name would not be so generally detested, and the Part
 " that you would have taken in those Political Questions which
 " unhappily divide us, would have been much more to your Cre-
 " dit, tho' not so lucrative.—I should not have said thus much, if
 " you had not pressed me to read a Pamphlet that is very ill cal-
 " culated to rilly the Fervent in Men's Minds, and which I con-
 " sider as a Libel on the Constitution—injurious to the Interests
 " and to the Dignity of the Crown, and an Insult to that Good
 " Sense to which you have appealed—I have only to add, that I
 " still

" I shall most cordially rejoice when these Disputes are at an End, and
 " when Questions of this Nature cease to animate our Conversa-
 " tions, and to four Men's Dispositions towards each other—such
 " Questions cannot benefit the Cause you wish to serve, but they
 " may ruin it; and it well behoves you, Sir, to *pause* and *think*!

" I am, &c."

" To John Reeves, Esq;
 " Cecil Street, Strand."

And the Witness being asked, Whether he received any Answer from Mr. Reeves, disavowing his being the Author of the Pamphlet? He said, He did not.

And being asked, If he has any Reason to know that Mr. Reeves received the Letter? He replied, Yes; from Mr. Reeves's having exposed it to Mr. Wright, in Consequence of a Paragraph in the Morning Chronicle of the 9th Instant, in which the offensive Extract was included, in Consequence of which Mr. Wright came to Mr. Owen, and found Fault with him for having accused Mr. Reeves of being the Author, informing Owen that he (the Witness) must have sent that Extract to the Morning Chronicle, in consequence of which the Witness wrote to Mr. Reeves a Letter, of which the following is a Copy; which was read; viz.

" Sir,

" Pall Mall, Nov. 11, 1795.

" Your Printer has insinuated, that the libellous Extract from
 " your Pamphlet, which appeared in the Morning Chronicle on the
 " 9th Instant, was sent by me, and he draws that Conclusion from
 " having seen the private Letter that I addressed to you on that
 " Subject, the 6th Instant. It is merely to refute a Falshood,
 " which may be the Foundation of much Calumny and Misre-
 " presentation, that I assure you I was perfectly ignorant of the
 " Extract, or any Comment on it, having been sent to any of the
 " Public Prints.—It is however incumbent on me to add, that I
 " perfectly approve of the Exposure, from the full Conviction I
 " have, that such Doctrines have a direct Tendency to Mischief,
 " and to alienate the Affections of the People from His Majesty
 " and His Government. As you have judged it expedient to
 " expose my Correspondence in Part, I call on your Candour to
 " produce the Whole of it, or I shall be under the Necessity of

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" sending Copies of my Letter to the different Papers in Defence
 " of myself.

" I am, Sir,
 " Your humble Servant,

" To John Reeves, Esq;
 " Cecil Street.

" W^m Miles."

And being asked, Whether he ever heard Mr. Reeves give any Directions respecting the Circulation of this Pamphlet? he replied, On Saturday the 21st Instant, Mr. Reeves came into Mr. Owen's Shop, and enquired how the Pamphlet attributed to him went off, or Words to that Effect. Mr. Reeves then put One or more Pamphlets in his Pocket, and, in the Witness's Hearing, desired Six Copies of the Pamphlet in Question to be sent to Lord Hawkebury's Office.

Mr. BENJAMIN HINTON being examined, said, That he is Porter to Mr. Wright the Printer, and delivers out the Publications.—That he remembers delivering out a Pamphlet, intitled, " Thoughts on the English Government."—That he delivered it to Mr. Owen the Bookseller in Piccadilly.—That he had been printing an Address from Mr. Reeves to the King.—That when he delivered the Pamphlet to Mr. Owen, he (the Witness) said it was Mr. Reeves's Pamphlet.—That he has seen Mr. Reeves come into Mr. Wright's Printing Office.—That he knows Mr. Reeves's Person.—As near as the Witness can guess, the Pamphlet came into his Hands about a Fortnight ago; and before that he has seen Mr. Reeves at the Office several Times.

Mr. THOMAS WRIGHT, a Printer, being examined, was asked, Whether he knew the Author of the Pamphlet, intitled, " Thoughts on the English Government?" He replied, he declined giving up the Name of the Author.

And being asked, Upon what Principle he refused to answer the Question? he said, One of the first Lessons inculcated on a Printer upon his Initiation into his Profession is, that the Name of the Author of a Manuscript committed to his Care or Keeping is a most sacred Deposit, from which he is never to part without the Assent or Permission of the Author, unless compelled by Public Justice.

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And being asked, Whether he should think himself justified in printing any Manuscript on any Political Subject brought to his Office? he said, No, by no Means; he would exercise that Judgment and Discretion which he possesses, in determining whether it contained Matter of a libellous Nature, whether public or private, or any Thing that was against what is called *contra bonos Mores*—That he has endeavoured to exercise that Judgment in all the Publications which he has been concerned in.

And being asked, Whether he had read the Pamphlet in Question? he replied, Yes; and if he had seen any Thing he thought objectionable he would not have printed it.

And the Witness being asked, Would not the Authority of the Person bringing him a Work weigh with him as well as his private Judgment? he replied, The Authority of the Person bringing him a Work to print would weigh with him (as he believes it would with every other Printer) as well as his private Judgment.

And being asked, Whether he had ever conversed with Mr. Reeves on the Subject of the Pamphlet in Question? he said, Yes.

And being asked, Whether he meant to say, that he had not conversed with Mr. Reeves for this Month past, on the Subject of the Pamphlet? he said, Not as the Author of it, to his Knowledge, but as the Person who superintended the Correction of the Press.

And being asked, In what Respect did Mr. Reeves superintend the Correction of the Press? he said, In correcting the Proofs, which he might do for a Friend.

And being asked, When the Publication was printed, to what Publisher did he send it? he replied, To the Person whose Name is at the Bottom of the Pamphlet.

And being asked, Whether he did not know that Person was Mr. Owen? he said, Certainly,

And being asked, By whose Advice or Direction did he send the Pamphlet to Mr. Owen? he said, By the Advice and Direction of no Person—it was his own doing entirely—he employed Mr. Owen.

And being asked, Whether he had ever any Conversation with Mr. Reeves respecting Mr. Owen being the Publisher? he said, Not previous to it; but as Mr. Reeves had corrected the Pamphlet, he mentioned it to him as the Gentleman who had corrected the Pamphlet.

And being asked, Had this Pamphlet not answered in Point of Sale, from whom should he expect to be paid? he said, From no one;
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the Loss would have been his own, and he understands the Profit would also be his.

And being asked, From what Authority he understood the Profit of this Pamphlet would have been his, if it sold well? he replied, From the Gentleman from whom he received the Manuscript.

And being asked, Who was that Gentleman? he replied, The Gentleman who corrected the Pamphlet.

And being asked, Was not that Gentleman Mr. Reeves? he answered, He had said that above.

And the Evidence being read to the Witness, he was asked, Whether he had any Explanation to add to the Answers he had already given? he said, He had not.

Mr. JOHN GILLET being examined, and shewn the Pamphlet, intitled, "Thoughts on the English Government," he was asked, Whether he had not heard Mr. Owen declare that Mr. Reeves was the Author of that Pamphlet? he replied, Yes, in his own Shop frequently.

Mr. THOMAS GILLET being examined, was asked, Whether he was not in Mr. Owen's Shop, on or about Saturday the 21st November? he said, Yes.

And being asked to relate any Conversation he heard respecting the Circulation of the Pamphlet, intitled, "Thoughts on the English Government?" he informed your Committee, That Mr. Reeves came into the Shop, and he said to Mr. Owen, "Where is this Pamphlet, that is ascribed to me."—Mr. Owen pointed to the Pamphlet.—Mr. Reeves took one up, and doubled it, and put it in his Pocket, and asked whether it had sold well—he then desired him to send Half a Dozen to some Person's Office in Westminster, but he (the Witness) did not distinctly hear to whose Office.

Mr. STEPHEN JONES being examined, said, He is employed in Mr. Wright's Office as Overseer in his Business, and is Superintendent of all the Publications in his Office.

Being shewn the Pamphlet, intitled, "Thoughts on the English Government," he was asked, Whether he superintended the Progress, through the Press, of that Pamphlet? he said, He did.

And being asked, Whether he corrected the Proofs? he said, He did.

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And being asked, Whether he and he alone corrected the Proofs? he said, No—he corrected them in Conjunction with Mr. Wright.—Mr. Wright invariably corrected them the First or the Second Time—No Sheet went to the Press without his reading it.

And being asked, Did no other Person superintend the correcting the Press besides himself and Mr. Wright? he said, Yes, there did.

And being asked, Who was that Person? he said, Mr. Reeves.

And being asked, If he received Directions from any Person superintending or correcting the Press of a Manuscript printed at his House, should he think himself bound to attend to those Directions, unless he considered the Person giving them either as the Author or acting for the Author? he said, He should certainly not; he should not suffer any One Correction to be made under such Circumstances.

And being asked, Whether he attended to any Direction or Correction given to him in the Case of printing the Pamphlet in Question, from Mr. Reeves? he replied, Yes.

Then, in Point of Fact, he was asked, Did he consider Mr. Reeves as the Author, or acting for the Author? he replied, Most certainly.

And being asked, Whether he has any Part of the original Copy? he said, He believes there may be some about the House.

And being asked, If there are any Proof Sheets about the House, corrected by Mr. Reeves? he said, He is inclined to think there are.

Mr. WRIGHT being again examined, was asked, How long Mr. Jones had superintended his Business? he said, Four or Five Years.

And being asked, Whether he had ever had Reason to doubt of Mr. Jones's Veracity or Accuracy? he replied, That he never had the least Doubt of his Veracity or Accuracy. Then,

Mr. JONES (having been directed by the Committee to endeavour to find the Proof Sheets alluded to in his Evidence) returned, and was again examined; and being asked, If he had found any of the Proof Sheets? he replied, He had brought the first he could lay his Hands on.—They are not complete.

Then the Witness produced the said Sheets, and said, That a few of the Alterations in the Margin may be his own, which would be confined to Typographical Errata. That he cannot speak positively.

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tively to all the others, but some are Mr. Reeves's, to the best of his Recollection.

And being asked, Whether he had not himself seen Mr. Reeves write upon some One of the Papers now delivered in by him to the Committee? he said, He had seen Mr. Reeves make Alterations on certain of the Sheets, but he could not from Memory state which they are.

And being asked, Whether he knew Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing? he said, He thinks he does.

He was then desired to look over the Proof Sheets delivered in by him, and point out what Notes or Observations are, to the best of his Knowledge, Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing.

And the Witness having looked over the said Sheets, he said, He finds all the Passages now marked by him with a Cross are, to the best of his Belief, Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing.

And being again asked, Whether he had not himself actually seen Mr. Reeves in the Act of marking the Proof Sheets, or some of them, now delivered in by him? he said, He had.

And being asked, In whose Hand-writing is the separate Paper included in the Sheets delivered in by him, which separate Paper appears to be Part of the Title of the said Pamphlet? he said, He believed it to be Mr. Reeves's.

And being asked, Whether he has had Knowledge of Mr. Reeves printing other Publications at Mr. Wright's Office? he replied, Yes, very many. He has been in the Habit, and had the Opportunity of knowing Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing.

And being asked, With those Means and Opportunity of knowing his Hand-writing, has the Witness any Doubt that this separate Paper, and the Observations and Notes in the Sheets, are in Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing? he said, He had not.

And being asked, What Mr. Reeves is the Person referred to by him, as the Corrector of the Proof Sheets, and Superintendent of the Publication of this Pamphlet? he answered, Mr. John Reeves, the Chairman of the Association for protecting Liberty and Property against Re-publicans and Levelers.

The Evidence having been read over to the Witness, he was asked, Whether he had any Explanation or further Observation to make upon it? he replied, He had not,—Then,

Mr. WRIGHT was further-examined, and asked, Whether he conceives Mr. Jones has a Right to send out Proof Sheets or Pamphlets, without any direct Communication with him? he said, Yes; he is in the Habit of doing so, as well as all other Overseers in Printing-Offices.

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And being asked, From his Knowledge of Mr. Jones, does he suppose he would deliver any Proof Sheets, as from his Office, that were not printed there? he said, He should suppose not.

And being asked, If he ever knew an Instance of his doing so? he replied, No.

And being asked, Whether Mr. Jones has not an Authority, from his Situation with him, to deliver any Proof Sheets of Works printed at his (the Witness's) Office, if required, without an immediate Application to him, the Witness? he replied, He certainly has; no printing could go on without a Person in Mr. Jones's Situation having that Power.

Mr. WRIGHT being again examined, was asked, Whether he recollected a Conversation with Mr. Reeves on the Subject of a Letter received by Mr. Reeves from Mr. Miles? he replied, Yes; and that Mr. Reeves had shewn it him.

Being shewn the Proof sheets delivered in by Mr. Jones, he was asked, If he knew whether the separate Paper, included therein, was Mr. Reeves's Hand Writing? he said, He believes it is; and that he is familiar with Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing.

And being asked, Whether he had seen Mr. Reeves since his last Examination by the Committee? he replied, Yes, and conversed with him on the Subject of this Publication.

And the Witness desired to add to his former Evidence, as the Committee had called on him to add any Explanation he thought proper—That Three or Four Proof Sheets had been sent to other Gentlemen, and some Corrections received from them on the Proof Sheets; particularly he can point out one in Page 7, and another in Page 12.—But on being shewn the Correction in Page 7, he admitted the Hand-writing to be Mr. Reeves's, but from the Blackness of it he supposes the Words to be traced over Writing in Pencil—The Word "active," in Page 12, he thought not to be Mr. Reeves's Hand-writing.

And the Witness being asked, Whether he meant that he had sent these Proofs to those other Gentlemen; and received the Corrections back from them himself? he answered, No—That he only knew of them through Mr. Reeves, whom he supposed to have sent the Proofs, and that it was to Mr. Reeves they were returned, and he adopted the Corrections where he chose it.

And being asked, Who the Person was that brought the Pamphlet to him; he answered, The Person who corrected the Proof—Mr. Reeves.

And the Witness desired to add, That as he had been asked on a former Examination, whether the Authority of the Person bring-

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ing him the Pamphlet would not weigh with him, as well as his own Judgment, on the Publication; he meant to declare that the Authority of Mr. Reeves bringing him the Pamphlet in Question had operated with him as an Inducement to publish it.

And being asked, Whether he had not read the Manuscript? he answered, Only Parts of it.

And being asked, Whether the Manuscript was not in the same Hand-writing as the separate Paper now shewn to him, and which contains the Title of the said Pamphlet? he said, That to the best of his Judgment and Recollection, such Parts as he had seen were of the same Hand-writing.

Mr. OWEN being further examined, and being shewn a Passage in Mr. Miles's Evidence, he was asked, Whether he recollected receiving from Mr. Reeves the Directions therein stated, to send Six Copies of the Pamphlet in Question to Lord Hawkebury's Office; and whether he had executed those Directions? he answered, He had; that he had sent them, directed to Mr. Chalmer, at Lord Hawkebury's Office.

And being asked, To whose Account he had charged them? he said, To Mr. Reeves.

And Mr. Owen being now apprized of the Consequences of the Answer he had made in his previous Examination refusing to answer any Questions that might be put to him;—the Witness begged Leave to retract that Answer, and apologize to the Committee; yet he still hoped the Committee would not press him to give up the Author, as, notwithstanding the Confession he had made of being the Publisher, he thought it might tend to criminate himself.

And your Committee having, as they conceive, abundant Proof from the Body of Evidence already before them, did not examine the Witness further.

And your Committee, conceiving any further Evidence respecting the Person responsible as Author or Publisher of the Pamphlet in Question wholly unnecessary, did not proceed in the Examination of many Persons, whose Testimony they have Reason to believe would still further establish the Facts stated by the preceding Witnesses. They have only to add, in Discharge of the Duty committed to them by the House; viz. To enquire who was the Author of the Pamphlet, intituled, 'Thoughts on the English Government, &c.' declared by the House to be "a malicious, scandalous, and seditious Libel, containing Matter tending to create Jealousies and Divisions among His Majesty's loyal Subjects; to alienate their Affections

" Affections from our present happy Form of Government, as estab-
 " lished in King, Lords, and Commons; and to subvert the true
 " Principles of our free Constitution; and that the said Pamphlet
 " is a high Breach of the Privileges of this House;"

That it appears to the Committee, That John Reeves, Esquire,
 of Cecil Street, in the Strand, is the Author, or has acted as the
 Author, of the said Publication.

R E P O R T

FROM THE

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Appointed to enquire who was the Author
of the Pamphlet,

INTITLED,

"Thoughts on the English Government,"
&c. &c.